

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for comparing a left formatted file to a right formatted file, comprising:

a computer-implemented step of detecting groups of characters in the left and right files;

a computer-implemented step of normalizing the groups in the left and right files, wherein the normalizing step includes at least one of the steps of removing carriage returns and converting multiple sequential white spaces into a single white space;

a computer-implemented step of comparing a group in the right file to a corresponding group in the left file to identify a modified group wherein some portion of the group is different between the left file and the right file; and

a computer-implemented step of generating a comparison result file containing the modified groups as section of the comparison result file to maintain the formatting of the modified groups when placed in the comparison result file;

wherein generating a comparison result file includes at least one of the computer-implemented steps of: (a) displaying the comparison result file to a user, and (b) storing the comparison result file in a computer-readable storage medium.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein detecting the groups in the files further comprises a computer-implemented step of detecting and distinguishing tags in the files to determine the groups in the files.

3. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein the files are HTML files and the tags are block-level HTML tags.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising a computer-implemented step of displaying the comparison result file to a user so that the user views the changed portion of the right file with formatting intact.

5. (Cancelled)
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the normalization step further includes the computer-implemented step of considering one or more rules for handling special elements in the files that would inhibit line-by-line comparison of the file.
7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6, wherein handling the special elements further comprises one or more computer-implemented steps of removing header tags from the files, removing script references from the files, removing intradocument links from the files, and converting relative URLs into absolute URLs in the file.
8. (Currently Amended) A method for comparing a left formatted file to a right formatted file, comprising:
  - a computer-implemented step of detecting groups of characters in the left and right files;
  - a computer-implemented step of comparing a group in the right file to a corresponding group in the left file to identify a modified group wherein some portion of the group is different between the left file and the right file; and
  - a computer-implemented step of generating a comparison result file containing the modified groups as section of the comparison result file to maintain the formatting of the modified groups when placed in the comparison result file;wherein detecting the groups further comprises a computer-implemented step of normalizing the right file and left file based on one or more rules in a rules database to permit line-by-line comparison of the right and left file despite the formatting in the files; ~~and~~

wherein the comparison further comprises a computer-implemented step of comparing the right file to the left file on a line-by-line basis wherein block level HTML elements in each file are treated as separate lines during the comparison; and wherein generating a comparison result file includes at least one of the computer-implemented steps of: (a) displaying the comparison result file to a user, and (b) storing the comparison result file in a computer-readable storage medium.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein the normalization further comprises a computer-implemented step of processing each character of the right and left files.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, wherein the character processing further comprises a computer-implemented step of detecting a preformatting start tag when scanning the document and skipping the pre-formatted text contained between the start tag and a preformatting end tag.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10, wherein the character processing further comprises one or more computer-implemented steps of removing carriage returns, converting multiple white spaces into a single white space, separating block level HTML elements into separate lines by inserting carriage returns before a block level start tag, and keeping text level tags on same line.

12. (Currently Amended) A system for comparing a left formatted file to a right formatted file, comprising:

a computer-implemented means for detecting groups of characters in the left and right files;

a computer-implemented normalizer adapted to perform at least one of the steps of removing carriage returns from the left and right files and converting multiple sequential white spaces into a single white space in the left and right files;

a computer-implemented means for comparing a group in the right file to a corresponding group in the left file to identify a modified group wherein some portion of the group is different between the left file and the right file; and

a computer-implemented means for generating a comparison file containing the modified group as sections of the comparison result file to maintain the formatting of the modified groups when placed in the comparison result file;

wherein generating a comparison result file includes at least one of the computer-implemented steps of: (a) displaying the comparison result file to a user, and (b) storing the comparison result file in a computer-readable storage medium.

13. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 12, wherein the detecting means further comprises a computer-implemented means for detecting and distinguishing tags in the files to determine the groups in the files.

14. (Previously Amended) The system of claim 13, wherein the files are HTML files and the tags are block-level HTML tags.

15. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 12 further comprising a computer-implemented means for displaying the comparison result to a user so that the user views the changed portions of the right file with the formatting intact.

16. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 14, wherein the normalizer is adapted to process the right file and left file based on one or more computer-implemented rules in a rules database to permit line-by-line comparison of the right and left file despite the formatting in the files.

17. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 16, wherein the normalizer further comprises one or more computer-implemented rules for handling special elements in the files that would inhibit the line-by-line comparison of the file.

18. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 17, wherein the normalizer further comprises one or more computer-implemented steps of removing tags from the files, removing script references from the files, and removing intradocument links from the files, and converting relative URLs into absolute URLs in the file.

19. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 16, wherein the comparing means further comprises a computer-implemented means for comparing the right file to the left file on a line-by-line basis wherein each block in each file is treated as a line during the comparison.

20. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 16, wherein the normalizer further comprises a computer-implemented character processor that processes each character of the right and left files.

21. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 20, wherein the character processor further comprises a computer-implemented means for detecting a preformatting start tag when scanning the document and means for skipping the pre-formatted text contained between the start tag and a preformatting end tag.

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the normalizing step further comprises the computer-implemented step of removing header tags from the files.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the normalizing step further comprises the computer-implemented step of removing script references from the files.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the normalizing step further comprises the computer-implemented step of removing intradocument links from the files.

26. (Currently Amended) A method for comparing a left HTML file to a right HTML file, comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

detecting corresponding groups of characters in the left and right files, the detecting step including the step of scanning the respective file for a groups of characters bounded by two block-level HTML tags, wherein block-level HTML tags are HTML tags that break flow of text when an HTML document is rendered;

comparing a group in the right file to a corresponding group in the left file to identify a modified group wherein some portion of the group in the left file is different from the group the right file; and

generating a comparison result file reflecting at least a portion of the modified group;

wherein generating a comparison result file includes at least one of the computer-implemented steps of: (a) displaying the comparison result file to a user, and (b) storing the comparison result file in a computer-readable storage medium.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, further comprising the computer-implemented step of normalizing corresponding groups in the left and right files, wherein the normalizing step includes at least one computer-implemented step taken from a group consisting of, (a) a step of removing carriage returns and (b) a step of converting multiple sequential white spaces into a single white space, wherein the comparing step involves the computer-implemented step of comparing a normalized group in the right file to a corresponding normalized group in the left file to identify a modified group wherein some portion of the normalized group in the left file is different from the normalized group the right file.

28. (Previously Added) The method of claim 27, wherein the comparing step involves line-by-line comparison of the corresponding groups.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 27 wherein the normalizing step includes the computer-implemented step of removing header tags from the files.

30. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 27 wherein the normalizing step includes the computer-implemented step of removing script references from the files.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 27 wherein the normalizing step includes the computer-implemented step of removing intradocument links from the files.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, further comprising the computer-implemented step of normalizing corresponding groups in the left and right files, wherein:

the normalizing step include at least one computer-implemented step taken from a group consisting of, (a) a step of removing carriage returns, (b) a step of converting multiple sequential white spaces into a single white space, (c) a step of removing header tags from the files, (d) a step of removing script references from the files, and (e) a step of removing intradocument links from the files; and

wherein the comparing step involves the computer-implemented step of comparing a normalized group in the right file to a corresponding normalized group in the left file to identify a modified group wherein some portion of the normalized group in the left file is different from the normalized group the right file.

33. (Currently Amended) A computerized system for comparing a left HTML file to a right HTML file, comprising:

a computer-implemented means for detecting corresponding groups of characters in the left and right files, the detecting means including means for scanning the

respective file for a groups of characters is bounded by two block-level HTML tags, wherein block-level HTML tags are HTML tags that break flow of text when an HTML document is rendered;

a computer-implemented means for comparing a group in the right file to a corresponding group in the left file to identify a modified group wherein some portion of the group in the left file is different from the group the right file; and

a computer-implemented means for generating a comparison result file reflecting at least a portion of the modified group;

wherein generating a comparison result file includes at least one of the computer-implemented steps of: (a) displaying the comparison result file to a user, and (b) storing the comparison result file in a computer-readable storage medium.